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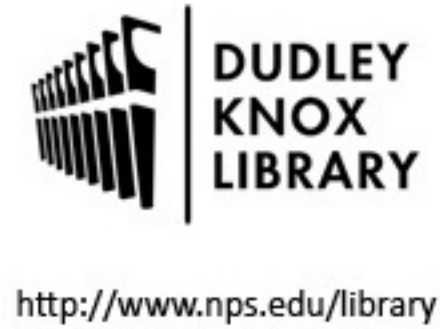


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# NAVAL POSTGRADUATE SCHOOL
## Monterey, California

# THESIS

**MONGOLIA'S SEARCH FOR SECURITY**

by

Ganbaatar Donrov

March 2001

Thesis co-advisors: Lyman Miller
Daniel Moran

THESIS
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**13. ABSTRACT *(maximum 200 words)***

Mongolia entered a new security environment with the end of the Cold War. The demise of the Soviet Union and withdrawal of Soviet troops from its territory have presented opportunities and challenges for Mongolia. On the positive side, Mongolia has broken free from its narrow geostrategic framework and is now charting its own future by pursuing a more balanced policy toward Russia and China and exploring the opportunities for closer ties with the outside world. On the negative side, the end of Moscow's security umbrella heightened Ulaanbaatar's vulnerability. Now Mongolia must address on its own the entire spectrum of threats to its security.

This thesis examines the dilemmas and opportunities facing Mongolia in the post-Cold War, post-Soviet Union world. Analyzing its changing relations with Russia and China, this study focuses on Mongolia's search for a "third option" - reliable security and economic partners.

The best strategy for Ulaanbaatar, while pursuing a balanced and neutral policy toward its neighbors, to maintain independence and economic survival is establishing counterweights to Moscow and Beijing's influence. Cooperation with the international community, active participation in regional and international arrangements, and creating a security regime in Northeast Asia comprise the "third option." Mongolia sees maximum benefits through multilateralism.


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**MONGOLIA'S SEARCH FOR SECURITY**

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Submitted in partial fulfillment of the
requirements for the degree of

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# ABSTRACT

Mongolia entered a new security environment with the end of the Cold War. The demise of Mongolia's former mentor and protector, the Soviet Union, and the withdrawal of Soviet troops from its territory have offered opportunities and challenges for its policy makers. On the positive side, breaking free from narrow geostrategic frameworks, Mongolia is now allowed to chart its own future by pursuing a more balanced policy towards its sole neighbors, Russia and China, as well as by exploring the opportunities for closer ties with the outside world. On the negative side, the end of Moscow's security umbrella heightened Ulaanbaatar's security vulnerability. Now it has to cope on its own with the entire spectrum of threats to its security.

This thesis examines the dilemmas and opportunities facing Mongolia in the post-Cold War, post-Soviet Union world by analyzing its fast-changing relations with Russia and China. Specifically, this study will focus on Mongolia's search for a "third option" - reliable security and economic partners - to ensure its security.

This thesis contends that while pursuing a balanced and neutral stance towards its powerful neighbors, the best strategy for Ulaanbaatar to secure the national independence and economic survival is to establish counterweights to Moscow and Beijing's influence through cooperation with the wider international community, through an active participation in regional and international arrangements, and by contribution to the creation of a regional security regime in Northeast Asia. A small country like Mongolia sees only benefits from multilateral approach.

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# EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This thesis examines the dilemmas and opportunities facing Mongolia in the post-Cold War, post-Soviet Union world by analyzing its fast-changing relations with its two powerful neighbors, Russia and China. Specifically, this study will focus on Mongolia's search for the "third option" - new security and economic partners - to ensure its security and economic survival.

The fall of its patron, the Soviet Union, and withdrawal of the Soviet troops from its territory created a new security environment for Mongolia. Mongolia's policy makers face opportunities and challenges. On one hand, the country ends its role as a pawn in the relations between its neighbors and is allowed to pursue an even-handed policy towards them and to explore opportunities for closer ties with the outside world beyond its narrow geopolitical confines of position. On the other hand, Mongolia is left without a security umbrella, heightening its security vulnerability. Now Mongolians have to cope on their own with the entire spectrum of threats - military, economic, and ideological - to their security. Although the broader external environment surrounding Mongolia has changed favorably, it still contains uncertainties that inspire concerns. Mongolians are looking for a new reliable security guarantee. This thesis contends that the best strategy for the country to secure its national independence and economic survival is to establish counterweights to Moscow and Beijing through cooperation with the wider international community and an active engagement in regional and international arrangements while maintaining a balanced policy towards its two great powers. A small country, like Mongolia, sees only benefits from a multilateral approach.

In addition, this study reflects the argument that much of its future ties with and support from the community of free nations, as well as its geopolitical weight in the region, will also depend on the outcome of its on-going practice with parliamentary democracy. It has been a decade since Mongolia abandoned one-party communist rule and undertook the challenge of a simultaneous transition towards democracy and capitalism.

The thesis synthesizes works of many scholars who have dealt with the aspects of Mongolian security issues. The study describes alternative theories of international relations, such as a balance of power and collective security, to establish a framework of analysis. It adapts the approaches presented by Kenneth N. Waltz in the *Theory of International Politics*, Glenn H. Snyder in the *Alliance Theory: A Neutralist First Cut*, and David W. Ziegler in the *War, Peace, and International Politics*. Extensive reviews of bibliographic material and open-source publications are used to assess the external security environment of Mongolia, current and future security trends in the Northeast Asia region to which it belongs, Mongolia's attempts to maintain a delicate balance with its two neighbors, its bilateral relations with other regional and world powers, and its involvement in multilateral security arrangements.

The results indicate that great emphasis placed by Ulaanbaatar on the expansion and consolidation of its political and diplomatic ties results from its limited military capability, since the security of a country with a small population cannot depend on military power. Entering into alignment with a third military power could offset such vulnerability. However, the diminishing role of ideology and military power as a primary means of defining global and regional relations, the relatively peaceful environment in

Northeast Asia, as well as Mongolia's historical lesson of excessive dependence on one particular state and the costs entailed by such relationship, prevent the country from taking such a step. It would unduly alarm and provoke suspicion in Russia and China and might set off a spiral of mistrust towards Mongolia among these powers or. Therefore, a new "National Security Concept" states that in peacetime Mongolia will not be part of any military alliance and will strictly adhere to the policy of not allowing foreign troops to enter, be stationed in, or pass through the national territory in the absence of relevant Mongolian legislation.

Mongolia's determination to pursue such a non-aligned, neutral policy and to expand and strengthen its ties with free world offers the most viable way of insuring Mongolia's continued independence and sovereignty.

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# I. INTRODUCTION

## A. BACKGROUND

The end of the Cold War, the full normalization of Sino-Soviet/Russian relations, and the break-up of the Soviet Union ends Mongolia's role as a pawn in the power politics of its two powerful neighbors. This allows Mongolia to chart its own future and explore opportunities for closer ties with the outside world beyond its narrow geopolitical confines.

For eight decades, Mongolia served as a large buffer state between China and Russia. Figuring prominently in Russian and Chinese national security interests, it was an important factor in their balance of power calculations.[1] The ideal situation for Mongolia was to maintain positive relations between both of these countries. However, Mongolia's historical animosity and mistrust of China, its geostrategic location, and the bipolar nature of the Cold War created only limited alternatives for Ulaanbaatar. These conditions meant that the only realistic alternative was for Mongolia to align with its northern neighbor. This was the lesser of two evils. The Soviet Union developed into Mongolia's mentor, providing military and economic aid from 1921 onward.

Since the fall of its mentor and protector, Mongolia has seen both dilemmas and opportunities. The positive effect is that Mongolia has broken free from narrow geostrategic frameworks. Mongolia can now pursue an independent policy and expand the horizon of its diplomatic ties. Mongolia has acquired a greater international focus that it lacked in the past due to the Soviet military presence. Mongolia's relationship with the

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[1] Ravdan Bold, "Adrift without the Soviets," *Far Eastern Economic Review*, 3 October 1991, 30.

Soviet Union ensured its existence as a nation-state. However, it entailed tremendous political and social costs:

- Restriction of independent foreign policy,
- Continued hostile relations with China,
- Significant dilution of national sovereignty,
- Limited economic growth and possibilities,
- Gained external enemies.

On the negative side, Russia's strategic abandonment has heightened Mongolia's security concerns. The national security of a country with a small population and vast territory cannot depend solely on its military power. Mongolia's dilemma is to offset such inability and produce a sense of security. An alliance with a third power would satisfy this requirement. However, such an attempt to enhance its security would alarm Russia and China, provoke their suspicion, and set off a spiral of hostility. This might lead to their adoption of adversarial policies. Such policies would negatively affect Mongolia's economic development. Without a functioning regional collective security system in northern Asia, therefore, Mongolia cannot afford to ignore regional uncertainties, the rise in China's military expenditures, and changes in China's foreign policy.

The demise of its main trading partner, the Soviet Union, has had serious economic implications. The breakdown of the Council for Mutual Economic Assistance (CMEA) resulted in the collapse of Mongolia's economy. After several years of negative growth, the economy is now recovering. However, it still has a long way to go.

Mongolia desires to take advantage of this period of international and regional stability to concentrate on its economic development. However, it remains in a position

of strategic vulnerability. As Mongolia moves toward an uncertain future and away from Russia, China emerges as the primary concern. Ulaanbaatar seeks to learn from past mistakes and not suffer again at the hands of powerful countries.

Mongolia is pursuing a foreign policy of active neutrality with a focus on multilateralism. This policy contains the following four elements:

- Maintaining a balanced relationship with Russia and China,
- Enhanced relations with countries in the West and East, especially the United States, Japan and Germany,
- Active participation on the issues of strengthening regional security,
- Creating a collective security mechanism in Northeast Asia.

This strategy offers the most viable way of insuring Mongolia's continued independence and sovereignty.

## B. OBJECTIVE OF STUDY

The purpose of this study is to examine the dilemmas and opportunities facing Mongolia in the post-Cold War, post-Soviet Union world. This will be accomplished by analyzing Ulaanbaatar's changing relations with Russia, China, and other influential countries. Specifically, this study will focus on Mongolia's search for a "third option" that rests on multiple reliable economic and security partners.

This study addresses four primary questions.

- What are the pros and cons of the different security options facing a small country in a region dominated by two or more superpowers?
- How can such countries escape the geographic limitations?

- How may such countries achieve a balance in bilateral relations with neighboring countries?
- What kinds of structures ameliorate the impact of anarchy and the security dilemma in the region?

The answers to these questions are explained at the systems level of international relations. This thesis contends that the logic of the interstate relationships from the Cold War era "balance of power" is not acceptable in the new environment. While pursuing a balanced and neutral stance, the best strategy for Ulaanbaatar is to establish counterweights to Moscow and Beijing's influence. Mongolia sees the accomplishment of this strategy through cooperation with the wider international community, active participation at international forums, and contribution to forming a regional security regime.

In addition, the author believes that the future of Mongolia's ties with and support from the community of free nations will depend in great part on its on-going practice of parliamentarian democracy.

## C. IMPORTANCE OF STUDY

The significance of this study is two-fold. Firstly, it seeks to analyze Mongolia's foreign policy transition beyond the narrow Cold War geostrategic framework between its two neighboring powers. It assesses Mongolia's security challenges as it moves away from Russia towards an uncertain future where the great concern is China. In this new environment, it remains vulnerable to possible future threats and intimidation from China. Secondly, the thesis analyzes the factors that block and favor the development of multilateral security architecture in Northeast Asia. Mongolia advocates the development

of such a multilateral institution to supplement bilateral relations and ensure the security of the region.

## D. METHOD OF ANALYSIS

This study employs the system-level approach to understanding the present and future Mongolian foreign policy. Focusing on the international structure and the interactions of states, this study presumes that a country's foreign policy is a reaction to threats, uncertainties, and opportunities in the state's external environment. The national security of Mongolia is a part of the broader international security and as such, it is directly dependent on the latter.

## E. STRUCTURE OF THESIS

This thesis consists of five chapters. Following this introductory chapter, Chapter II reviews the literature on international relations, specifically theories of balance of power and of multilateralism, to highlight the pros and cons of these two different options a small country might choose. Chapter III identifies how international changes since early 1990s have created new security challenges and opportunities for Mongolia and analyze the bilateral relations of Mongolia with its two neighbors, Russia and China, and other countries. Chapter IV discusses multilateral security options of Mongolia and reflects on the factors blocking and favoring the development of regional security architecture in Northeast Asia. The final chapter offers conclusions about the external behavior of Mongolia.

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# II. REVIEW OF THEORETICAL LITERATURE

## A. INTRODUCTION

This chapter reviews the literature on the general concept of security of nation-states and the approaches through which they seek to insure their security and economic survival. For most of the past century, Mongolia has pursued a "balance of power" foreign policy through the influence of the Soviet Union. This system is no longer applicable in the current security environment of Northeast Asia. Mongolia must find another framework for its foreign policy. The approach recommended here is multilateral "collective security." The chapter will detail these approaches to security - neorealist "balance of power" and neoliberal "collective security." These provide a framework for interpreting and explaining security practices and behavior of states. Neorealists claim that pursuit of security must be competitive and based on self-help, and based on military power playing a crucial role. However, they posit that self-help does not rule out seeking assistance from others by forming alliances. Collective security argues that in an anarchic environment, states can achieve security through cooperation. In the current security environment, this is the more rational approach.

## B. THEORY OF BALANCE OF POWER

According to the neorealists, the main purpose attributed to balance of power is the quest for national security, defined as survival, in a world of anarchy. They argue that all other goals are lost unless a state makes provision for one's security. Kenneth Waltz in his *Theory of International Politics* says that state leaders strive to achieve this objective through internal efforts, such as increasing economic capability and military strength, and

external efforts, such as strengthening and enlarging one's own alliances or weakening and shrinking opposing ones.[2]

Further, neorealists hold that the structure of the international system directly affects the conditions under which alliances are formed, the issue of whom to ally with, and how the ratio of benefits and costs is calculated. Thus, alliance formation in a multipolar world differs from what takes place in a bipolar system.[3] States either balance if they ally with weaker states in opposition to a principal hegemonic source of danger, or states bandwagon when they ally with the state that poses the major threat. In the latter case, there is no formation of balance of power. Instead, bandwagoning states contribute to creating world hegemony.[4]

Small states join alliances because they must rely fundamentally on other states, while great powers seek alignments with small states both for the political and military gains afforded. The logic of neorealism leads to the conclusion that states form alliances as a result of perceived benefits greater than the assumed costs. The need for an alliance and the extent to which each prospective partner meets that need largely determine the size of relative benefits and costs. The greater the shortfall between one's own military capability and that of its most likely antagonist and the higher the perceived threat from that opponent, the greater a state's alliance need.

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[2] Kenneth N. Waltz, *Theory of International Politics* (University of California, Berkeley: McGraw-Hill, Inc., 1979), 118.

[3] Glenn H. Snyder, "Alliance Theory: A Neutralist First Cut" in *The Evolution of Theory in International Relations*, ed. Robert L. Rothstein (Columbia: University of South Carolina Press, 1991), 90; Kenneth N. Waltz, *Theory of International Politics* (University of California, Berkeley: McGraw-Hill, Inc., 1979), 118.

[4] Kenneth N. Waltz, *Theory of International Politics* (University of California, Berkeley: McGraw-Hill, Inc., 1979), 126.

The security benefits from alliances include greater deterrence, a stronger defense, and a preclusion of the ally's alliance with one's adversary. The costs entailed from membership in an alliance may be increased risk of war, alienation of an ally's enemy, and reduced freedom of action, as a result of the promissory obligations by each side contained in the alliance to take specific actions in the event of contingencies.[5]

In a multipolar system determining who is a danger to whom and who can be expected to deal with threats and problems is often unclear. States have an incentive to come to the assistance of each other in the event of attack by an outside party; otherwise, the attacker's power resources may be substantially increased. This is the logic of balance-of-power theory. There are no peacetime alliances. However, alliances formed at peacetime with the goal of reducing the insecurity of anarchy and which are not directed at any specific opponent may be perceived by other states as a threat to their security and may provoke counter-alliance.

According to Glenn Snyder, parties within an alliance have twin fears, termed as abandonment and entrapment. Together these dangers constitute the alliance security dilemma: increasing one's commitment to the alliance may increase the risk of being dragged into a war over the ally's interests that one does not share, but the effort to reduce the danger of entrapment may lead to a risk of being abandoned.[6] Glenn Snyder suggests that there is a perceived tradeoff between entrapment and abandonment, in which allies seek to maintain an optimal balance. The less the dependence of a state on

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[5] Glenn H. Snyder, "Alliance Theory: A Neutralist First Cut" in *The Evolution of Theory in International Relations*, ed. Robert L. Rothstein (Columbia: University of South Carolina Press, 1991), 90.

[6] Ibid., 93.

the alliance for its security, the greater is the state's likelihood of having flexibility of action and bargaining strength within the alliance. However, this dependence may change as a result of changes in individual members' security environment or in the degree of threat.

In a bipolar system, states form an alliance with a clear understanding of who is the adversary. Since allies add relatively little to the superpowers' capabilities, alliance leaders make their strategies mainly according to their own calculations and interests.[7] The system structure provides little or no opportunity for states to defect, or if they have an incentive, they will be prevented by their own patron. The alliance security dilemma is weak since the danger of abandonment is low. The fear of entrapment is present for both the superpowers and their clients. Given the dependency relationships and the absence of alignment alternatives, the potential for fracturing the alliance is lower under conditions of bipolarity than in situations of multipolarity.

What happens to alliances when interests diverge and the possibility of alliance disintegration increases? Realists suggest that such a condition tends to arise in the aftermath of major wars or during periods when the international distribution of power undergoes fundamental change. In such periods, states weigh their interests and values against normative standards underlying the alliance commitment. The formation, maintenance, and termination of alliances have important implications for the stability of the international system.

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[7] Kenneth N. Waltz, *Theory of International Politics* (University of California, Berkeley: McGraw-Hill, Inc., 1979), 169, 171.

## C. THEORY OF COLLECTIVE SECURITY

Collective security is considered to be sharply at variance with neorealism and, thus, to be the opposite of balance of power politics. Instead, it stresses international legal rights and obligations as regulators for the preservation of international peace, a heavy reliance on reason in human affairs, and confidence in the peace-building function of world public opinion.

Generally, collective security is an approach to peace involving an agreement by which states promise to take collective action against any states defined as an aggressor. In his study *War, Peace, and International Politics*, David Ziegler holds that the purpose of collective security is to solve problems within the system and keep peace among its members, not to protect them against external enemies.

As neorealist balance of power politics attaches central importance to power, the collective security approach similarly acknowledges power, but the latter seeks to subordinate that power to international institutions that possess authority. The collective security system forbids its members to resort to force to settle disputes and requires them to use force to punish any member that does.[8] These are two ways through which such collective security infringes on the traditional rights of sovereign states; in all other respects, states remain independent to pursue other national interests, compete for trade, and run their domestic affairs as they fit.[9]

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[8] David W. Ziegler, *War, Peace, and International Politics* - 8th ed. (Longman: Addison-Wesley Educational Publishers Inc., 2000), 199.

[9] Ibid., 200.

Emphasizing how the international relationship should be conducted, collective security theorists disdain national armaments, secret treaties of alliances and balance-of-power politics. Alliances are ruled out among members of a collective security community. According to David Ziegler, a state does not have to designate a few states as trustworthy since all other states in the system will automatically become allies in case of aggression. Collective security advocates posit that alliance formation at any other time only arises suspicion.

Collective security arrangements insure the security of all states, big and small alike. A country that uses force for any reason whatsoever and violates "territorial integrity and political independence" will face not just a single victim but also a collective response.[10] At same time, collective security obliges all states to participate in sanctions against an aggressor - the system does not permit a policy of neutrality or isolation.

Besides the benefits presented above, David Zeigler points out the weaknesses of collective security community. He detects the problem of agreeing on what constitutes "an aggression." The classic formulation of "violation of territorial integrity and political independence" is not adequate. Although the developments of international events and need for an explicit and unambiguous criteria on which to act led to adopt a more broad definition covering many kinds of behavior, the acts listed in that definition were not exhaustive, which in turn produced loopholes.

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10 "Violation of territorial integrity and political independence" is a typical formulation for the aggression as cited in David W. Ziegler, *War, Peace, and International Politics* - 8th ed. (Longman: Addison-Wesley Educational Publishers Inc., 2000), 199.

A second problem, according to David Zeigler, is getting all states to participate in collective action against an aggressor. If the distribution of power is unequal among the members of a collective security system, refusal by smaller states to join in actions does not much matter. However, reluctance of one or two major states does. Such refusal may derive from their self-interest or the fact that the aggressor is a powerful neighbor, long-standing ally, or the perceived victim. In addition, geographical remoteness may produce reluctance as well.

Another challenge facing a collective security system is the organization's slow reaction to crises, which results from the difficulty of finding facts and determining who is at fault and of the impossibility of planning actions before the actual invasion occurs or on the basis of suspicion.

The theory, as well as its practice, suggests that such a system can work more effectively on a regional level. Supporters of regional collective security systems argue that only at this level can realistic solutions to problems be found. By limiting membership to states in a geographic region, regionalists contend, the regional security architecture will better work in maintaining peace among its members. Success may result due to the proximity of member states to each other or to members' common interests, similar resources or identical problems, or sense of regional identity, enhanced by the actions and attitudes of states external to the region. Other factors, such as a certain degree of shared linguistic, cultural, historical, or social bonds, a relatively high degree of integration, or regularity of interactions among national elites or people, may contribute to successful implementation of principles of collective security. All these will

enable the states to understand regional disputes better and come up with appropriate solutions.

# III. BILATERAL RELATIONS OF MONGOLIA

## A. INTRODUCTION

While serving as a buffer state during the Cold War, Mongolia participated in the defense system of the Warsaw Pact, acting as the USSR's eastern frontier. It effectively shielded the former Soviet Union from the People's Republic of China (PRC). The collapse of the Soviet Bloc and China's new international strength prompted a wholly new international situation. This profoundly changed the basis of Mongolia's international relations and security doctrine. Due to these dramatic shifts in the external security environment, Mongolia has developed new approaches to its national security. The critical factor is a balanced relationship with both of its two neighbors. Mongolia's relations with them loom largest, given their close proximity and the fact that both have a history of dominance over Mongolia. The key orientation in the country's foreign policy - relying on a third force - complements this need for balance. The diversification of its relationships is in the best interest of Mongolia.

This chapter will analyze Ulaanbaatar's past and present relations with Mongolia's neighboring powers and other influential countries. It will emphasize the importance of maintaining close and constructive relations with them. This study stresses a policy that preserves good relations with both Russia and China, without taking either's line, as the wisest. Ulaanbaatar's determination to foster regional security and stability is significant in the development of external relations. For example, the Mongolian government's declaration of its territory as a "single state" nuclear free zone avoids past mistakes and reinforces stability in this strategically sensitive region.

In this chapter, brief background information about Mongolia precedes the analysis. Geography, resources, and history affect the construction of Mongolia's security. The historical developments that form Mongolia's security conception include:

- continuous struggle to establish and consolidate a Mongol nation;
- wars fought among the various nations of the proto-Mongol state as well as against its neighbors;
- the ignominy of being subsumed by Manchu dynasty;
- efforts to achieve national unity in confronting the Manchus and regain self-determination;
- post-independence efforts against annexation and absorption policy of Mongolian territory by its powerful neighbors;
- post-1945 struggle to sustain relative independence and national identity under the Soviet empire;
- confrontation with China during the height of the Cold War;
- efforts to maintain state sovereignty and reinforce the independence in the post-Cold War, post-Soviet world.

These factors formed Mongolia's past framework for operating in the international community.

## B. GEOGRAPHY, RESOURCES, AND HISTORY

Mongolia is geographically isolated. It is land locked, sharing a 2,178-mile frontier with Russia to the north and a 2,923-mile with China to the south, east, and west.

It encompasses a territory of about 604,250 square miles, with a population of 2.6 million.

Mongolia is rich in natural resources. Mongolia's mineral deposits include copper, gold, silver, iron, chrome, zinc, tungsten, and mercury. Large deposits of coal and oil have been found. A major source of livelihood is livestock, which numbered 30 million in 2000.[11] The economic development of Mongolia's natural resources has been poor as its low per capita GDP of some US$400 in 1999 shows.

Historically, the nation-state of Mongolia is the successor to the Great Mongol Empire. The empire controlled China and Russia from the late 13th through the 14th and 16th centuries respectively. The decline of Mongol power presented its neighbors opportunities to regain lost territories and expand their control and influence. The result was division of greater Mongolia between its two stronger neighbors during the 17th century. It gradually underwent a transformation from "pivot to a mere pawn in a wider Great Game" in Central and Inner Asia.[12] In the late 17th century, "Outer" Mongolia fell under the control of the Manchu Qing dynasty in China, where it remained until 1911. Support from Russia enabled Mongolia to proclaim its independence from the Manchu empire. Outer Mongolia's rationale for declaring its independence was that its allegiance was to the Manchus, and not to China.[13] In November 1924, Outer Mongolia changed its

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[11] Mongolia's 2000 Statistics Data, *Udur Toli* (*Daily News)*, No. 023(586), 27 January 2001.

[12] Marko Milivojevic, *The Mongolian Revolution of 1990: Stability or Conflict in Inner Asia?* (Conflict Studies No. 242, London: Research Institute for the Study of Conflict and Terrorism, June 1991), 16.

[13] "Historical path of Mongolia's Statehood and Independence." Available [OnLine] http://www.undp.org/missions/mongolia/histdoc.htm [Feb 10, 2000].

name to the "Mongolian People's Republic" (MPR) with a capital at Ulaanbaatar. Mongolia remained nominally under Chinese suzerainty under Sino-Russian and Sino-Soviet agreements and treaties of 1913, 1915, and 1924.[14] In 1946, the Republic of China government recognized the independence of Outer Mongolia following the plebiscite in favor of independence.[15] Several factors influenced Mongols to side with the Soviets. These included:

- Opposition to China was one important respect where Mongolian national interests coincided with Russian strategic interests.
- The Russian threat was indirect. The Soviets were unlikely to move in, dominate, and assimilate the Mongols as the Chinese have shown through takeover of Inner Mongolia.
- Improved health and education assured physical survival for Mongols.
- The Soviets provided a comparatively large economic assistance.

Led by strategic considerations, the Soviets shaped the MPR in a manner that served to its own interests. Before the Cold War entered East Asia, Mongolia was already on the Soviets' side. The principal Soviet goal was to form a defensive buffer, protecting the vulnerable Trans-Siberian Railway corridor running south of lake Baikal and close to the Mongolian border. Protection of this key point affected the defense of the vital Soviet

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[14] Tumurchuluun G., "Mongolia's Foreign Policy Revisited: Relations with Russia and the PRC into the 1990s" in *Mongolia in the Twentieth Century: Landlocked Cosmopolitan*, ed. Stephen Kotkin and Bruce A. Elleman (New York: M.E. Sharpe Inc., 1999), 279.

[15] "Historical path of Mongolia's Statehood and Independence." Available [OnLine] http://www.undp.org/missions/mongolia/histdoc.htm [Feb 10, 2000]

interest in the vast Transbaikal territory and its population.[16] The Soviet influence and Chinese irredentism consequently shaped the background for Mongolia's strategic and political policies.

## C. MONGOLIA'S RELATIONS WITH RUSSIA

### 1. Cold-War Relations

Although Mongolia, unlike the Central Asian Republics, was not a part of the USSR, it relied heavily on the Soviet Union for its survival. Mongolia was a Soviet "satellite state."[17] The relationship between the two was a "patron-client relationship."[18]

The communist regime in Mongolia closely modeled the system and apparatus that controlled the Soviet Union. In addition to the direct party-to-party and government-to-government relations, the two countries developed bilateral ties at other significant levels. Soviet ministries, cabinet-level committees, provinces, scholarly and scientific institutions, factories, and other organizations directly dealt with their Mongolian counterparts. Education of Mongols in the USSR was an important factor in the political and cultural relations of the two countries. Several thousand Mongols went for advanced training in the USSR. Many Soviets worked as advisers, specialists, and workers in

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[16] Robert Rupen, *How Mongolia is really ruled: a Political History of the Mongolian People's Republic, 1900-1978* (Stanford, California: Hoover Institution Press, 1979), 92.

[17] See Tumurchuluun G., "Mongolia's Foreign Policy Revisited: Relations with Russia and the PRC into the 1990s" in *Mongolia in the Twentieth Century: Landlocked Cosmopolitan*, ed. Stephen Kotkin and Bruce A. Elleman (New York: M.E. Sharpe Inc., 1999).

[18] Mohan Malik, "Mongolia's Policy Options in the Post-Soviet Union" (The Korean Journal of Defense Analysis), 283.

Mongolia. The result was a complex relationship in which Soviet influence penetrated through ideology, institutional models, and personnel.

Mongolia did not make a foreign policy decisions without first considering Soviet policy. Mongolia's interests were subservient to Soviet security interests. The same relationship applied to Mongolia's economic development. Mongolia's solutions for economic development were ones that had been developed and used in the Soviet Union.

The extent of direct Soviet participation and interference in MPR was proportional to the degree of tension and threat in the Sino-Soviet relationship. The Soviets made little investment in Mongolia until the challenge of China surfaced in the late 1950s. Active economic assistance and high-level visits from China led to the visits to Mongolia of the chairman of the presidium of the Soviet Supreme Council in 1957 and of the Soviet defense minister in 1961. As Moscow-Beijing cooperation turned into competition and then confrontation, Moscow-Ulaanbaatar relations strengthened. The result was growth in the scale and intensity of Soviet involvement and a substantial increase in its investment into Mongolia. The visits of Brezhnev, Communist Party of the Soviet Union (CPSU) general secretary, in 1966 and 1974, and of the defense minister in 1970 and 1981 to Ulaanbaatar illustrated the integral character of Soviet policy towards Mongolia. However, the Soviet Union's involvement of Mongolia in "fraternal all-round cooperation" was at the expense of Mongolia's own interests.[19]

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[19] Ravdan Bold, "Northeast Asian security perspectives: the view from Mongolia" in Bold R., *Mongolia's Strategic View* (Ulaanbaatar: Institute for Strategic Studies, 1996), 7.

The USSR-MPR Mutual Assistance Treaty signed in 1946, renewed in 1966, and again in 1986 made it clear that attack on the MPR would be considered an attack on the USSR. Until its break-up, the Soviet Union enclosed Mongolia completely within its own defense system. When Moscow and Beijing were on the verge of war in 1969, the Soviet forces in Mongolia stood at over 100,000 troops, whose arms included fixed and mobile intermediate ballistic missiles with nuclear and chemical warheads.[20] It was only after Gorbachev came to power that Moscow began to downgrade Mongolia as a factor in Sino-Soviet relations and announce its intention to pull the troops out of Mongolia in 1986.

### 2. Post-Cold War Relations

The demise of the Soviet Union in 1991 and the complete Soviet troop withdrawal from Mongolia in 1992 "marked the end of Russia's imperialist policy" regarding Asian states.[21] The binding force of Marxist-Leninist ideology was over. Mongolians finally became "genuine masters of their land."[22] However, Mongolia confronted numerous difficulties. The Sino-Russian joint communiqué of May 1989 resulted in effect in strategic abandonment of Mongolia. The alliance previously based on the principle of "friendship and all-round cooperation with the Soviet Union as Mongolia's only security guarantee" evolved into one based on peaceful coexistence.[23]

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[20] Marko Milivojevic, *The Mongolian Revolution of 1990: Stability or Conflict in Inner Asia?* (Conflict Studies No. 242, London: Research Institute for the Study of Conflict and Terrorism, June 1991), 15.

[21] Russian President Yeltsin's words during the Mongolian President Ochirbat's visit to Moscow in 1993.

[22] "Mongolian Defense White Paper 1997-1998" (Ulaanbaatar: Institute for Strategic Studies 1998), 16.

[23] Ravdan Bold, "The Changing International Order and Mongolia's Security" in Bold R., *Mongolia's Strategic View* (Ulaanbaatar: Institute for Strategic Studies, 1996), 32.

The collapse of its main trading partner, the Soviet Union, exacerbated Mongolia's economic crisis. To make matters worse, the departing Soviets left a bill of 10.5 billion rubles (equal to US$16 billion).[24] Both sides disputed the debt's size, the dollar equivalent, and methods of repayment. Ulaanbaatar pointed out that the Soviet Union had monopolized gold, silver, copper, molybdenum, and tin mining in Mongolia, making her economically dependent on the Soviet Union and on its terms. Mongolia was then obliged to hand over their raw materials at prices dictated by the Russians.[25] Ulaanbaatar could not persuade Moscow to recalculate the debt or cancel half of it, however. Moreover, Russian policy to settle the trade in hard currency starting from January 1, 1991 had grave consequences on the Mongolian economy. The economic disruptions, shortages of the hard currency, Russian taxes, transit tariffs, and custom duties on Mongolian goods almost halted Mongolian trade with Russia in 1990-1992.

Nevertheless, since the two countries embarked on the similar path of democracy and free enterprise economy, Moscow and Ulaanbaatar have sought to make fresh start and revive their old linkages. In order to end the two years of uncertainty in relations between Russia and Mongolia, Mongolian President Ochirbat visited Moscow in January 1993 and signed a new Treaty of Friendly Relations and Cooperation. The treaty provided a new legal basis for the associated inter-governmental agreements and protocols to facilitate mutual ties.

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[24] Ibid., 8.

[25] Alan J.K. Sanders, "Foreign Relations and Foreign Policy" in *Mongolia in Transition*, ed. Ole Bruun and Ole Odgaard (Nordic Institute of Asian Studies, 1996), 34.

Today, Mongolia strives to maintain cordial relations with Moscow while avoiding establishing too close a security relationship. The Russians express their willingness to intensify the relations with their "old, true friend" in all spheres.[26] The two governments place emphasis on maximizing the effectiveness and efficiency of the three largest joint ventures in Mongolia - the Erdenet Copper-Molybdenum conglomerate, the Ulaanbaatar Railway and the Mongolroscvetmet (non-ferrous metal) Mining Company. These companies provide the majority of the Mongolia's budget. In addition, over 250 Russian-Mongolian small and medium-size businesses operate in Mongolia. Direct ties and cooperation between bordering regions have increased.

Russian President Putin's historic visit to Ulaanbaatar in November 2000 ended "some degree of coldness" that had emerged in the two countries' relationships since 1990.[27] The visit was important in that it assessed Russian-Mongolian relations of the past decade. Both sides developed a definite plan for bilateral cooperation in political, economical, trade, cultural, scientific, and humanitarian fields. A joint communiqué reflected all the agreements reached by the two presidents.

Russian analysts point out that the neutrality and sovereignty of Mongolia represent a considerable security element in Asia, given the geostrategic position of China. They write that in the event of a dominant Chinese position in Mongolia, the

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[26] "The visit of Byambadorj, Deputy Speaker of Mongolian Parliament, to Russian Duma." From the speech by P.V. Romanov, Russian Duma Acting Speaker. *Zuunii Medee (Century News),* No. 27 (601), 1 February 2001. Available [OnLine] http://www.mol.mn/zuunii_medee/zm2/main.htm

[27] "Full text of the interview with O.M. Derkovskyi, the Russian Ambassador to Mongolia," *Zuunii Medee (Century News),* N27 (601), 1 February 2001. Available [OnLine] http://www.mol.mn/zuunii_medee/zm2/main.htm

Russian Far East would become more vulnerable.[28] Others in Russia express concern about the weakening of economic position of Russia in Mongolia and stress the importance of regaining economic leverage. From a strategic perspective, they argue, Russia is interested not only in a friendly Mongolia, but also in a Mongolia strategically allied with Russia. Their concern lies in a dramatic shift in the balance of power in Asia if China or any other nation dominates Mongolia.[29]

Finally, despite positive the developments noted earlier, various contentious issues continue to bedevil bilateral relations. The issue of the debt has yet to be solved. Historical grievances, domestic political constraints, and cross-border smuggling and livestock rustling complicate bilateral ties. Nonetheless, because of its geographic proximity and historical ties, the Russian Federation will continue to be a major player in Mongolian foreign and security relations.

## D. MONGOLIA'S RELATIONS WITH CHINA

### 1. Cold-War Relations

The 1949 victory of Mao and the establishment of a new relationship between the Soviet Union and China caused a major change in the position of the Mongolia. Ulaanbaatar recognized the People Republic of China (PRC) in 1949. The new government in China, because of its relative political and military weaknesses, had no

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[28] Anatoly Arbatov's words in Tumurchuluun G., "Mongolia's Foreign Policy Revisited: Relations with Russia and the PRC into the 1990s" in *Mongolia in the Twentieth Century: Landlocked Cosmopolitan*, ed. Stephen Kotkin and Bruce A. Elleman (New York: M.E. Sharpe Inc., 1999), 282.

[29] Golman M. I., "The present Russian-Mongolian relationship" in *East and Asia on the Eve of the 21st Century* (Moscow: Institute for Eastern Studies, 1998), 275-281.

alternative but to accept the *fait accompli* and confirm the Nationalist Republic of China regime's acceptance in 1946 of Mongolia's independence.[30]

However, whenever the opportunity presented itself, the PRC tried to orient the MPR toward itself and reassert its authority over Mongolia. Mao reportedly sought but failed to obtain Stalin's support for a re-annexation of Mongolia in return for full Chinese participation in the Korean War.[31]

The PRC changed its tactics when direct political intervention did not work. It attempted to regain influence in the MPR through economic weapons. Following the signing of a Sino-Mongol economic and cultural cooperation agreement in 1952, Beijing made available to Mongolia large amounts of economic aid, including around 30,000 workers.[32] Other proposals and projects involving a large amount of Chinese labor force alarmed Mongols and the Soviets. The sparsely populated Mongolia needed manpower, but such a massive work force would have swamped and overwhelmed the Mongolians. Considering the military-strategic implications of a Chinese-controlled heavy industry and a Chinese population of several hundred thousand close to the Soviet border, the USSR forestalled the Chinese move and effectively reasserted its monopoly over Mongolia. In direct response to the Sino-Indian border dispute, China and Mongolia officially demarcated the borders by treaty in 1962.

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[30] Stobdan P., "Mongolia after the Cold War" (Asian Strategic Review 1993-1994), 219.

[31] Marko Milivojevic, *The Mongolian Revolution of 1990: Stability or Conflict in Inner Asia?* (Conflict Studies No. 242, London: Research Institute for the Study of Conflict and Terrorism, June 1991), 17.

[32] Ravdan Bold, "Northeast Asian security perspectives: the view from Mongolia" in Bold R., *Mongolia's Strategic View* (Ulaanbaatar: Institute for Strategic Studies, 1996), 9.

As Sino-Soviet cooperation grew into competition and then confrontation, Beijing's economic strategy towards Mongolia collapsed. The growing split between the two giants led relations between the PRC and MPR onto a downward spiral. Ulaanbaatar moved resolutely into the Soviet camp, accusing China of an "annexationist" policy towards Mongolia. Chinese leaders placed Mongolia in the same category as the Soviet Union – calling it "revisionist" and accusing it of not adhering to true Marxism-Leninism. The growing Soviet presence in the MPR increased Chinese concern. The deployment of substantial Soviet military forces along the Sino-Mongol border after 1965 made China particularly vulnerable to a Soviet attack.

The relations between the two countries did not begin to thaw until the death of Mao in 1976 and Deng Xiaoping's reemergence in 1977. Concurrent with improvements in Moscow-Beijing relations in the 1980s, Ulaanbaatar sent a delegation to the PRC in 1984 to discuss developing bilateral relations. In 1986, PRC and MPR reached a five-year agreement on trade. However, formal normalization of relations did not happen until the Deng-Gorbachev summit meeting in Beijing in May 1989.

### 2. Post-Cold War Relations

The Sino-Soviet rapprochement and the dissolution of the Soviet Union allowed China and Mongolia to normalize and then improve bilateral relations. The complete pullout of Soviet troops decreased the threat to China from Mongolian territory. These events, coupled with China's and Mongolia's open policies, have laid the foundations for improving bilateral relations.

The President Ochirbat's May 1990 visit to China was the first high-level visit since 1952. It was a historic milestone in his country's difficult relationship with China.

Chinese President Yang Shangkun reciprocated by visiting Ulaanbaatar in 1991, the first such visit in the 30 years. The cornerstone of the renewed diplomatic contacts was a new Sino-Mongolian "Treaty on Friendly Relations and Cooperation." Signed in April 1994 in Ulaanbaatar by Premiers Li Peng and Jasrai, it laid a new political and legal foundation for the growth of bilateral ties. The document removed China's fear of disturbance in its northern border area. It states that,

> Neither party shall enter any political-military bloc, not sign any agreement with a third party which may threaten the state sovereignty and security of the other party, and not allow the use of each other's territory to harm the state sovereignty and security of the other party."[33]

The wording of the treaty clearly expresses the Chinese desire to prevent another "Russia" from using Mongolia as the USSR did during the Cold War.

Strengthening of bilateral diplomatic ties has continued, with the recent visits by Mongol President Bagabandy and Chinese President Jiang Zemin to each other's capitals in December 1998 and July 1999, respectively.

Sino-Mongol economic relations meanwhile have substantially grown. Bilateral trade volume in 1999 was estimated at US$250 million or more than 500 percent over the figure in 1990. China has become Mongolia's second largest trade partner after Russia. In direct investment, China tops other countries in the world, with nearly 300 Chinese enterprises making investment in Mongolia.[34] Mongolia's rapidly growing economic linkages with China is causing concern and fear among Mongolians. The fears stem from

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33 "Treaty on Friendly Relations and Cooperation between Mongolia and the People's Republic of China, 29 April 1994, Ulaanbaatar, Mongolia" in "Mongolian Defense White Paper, 1997-1998" (Ulaanbaatar: Institute for Strategic Studies, 1998).

34 "Jiang Zemin visits Mongolia as an Act to strengthen Good-Neighborly and Firendly Relations with the Neighboring Countries." *Hong Kong Zhongguo Tongxun*, 19 July 1999.

claims, although not official, within China that Mongolia is a part of Greater China. China, according to these views, wants to see all Mongols absorbed into the Chinese nation and the territory administered by Mongolia incorporated into the PRC.[35]

Mongolians are concerned about China's leverage over their economy and fear that Chinese purchase of land and of shares in the Mongolian Stock Exchange may offer them considerable influence. With the weight of population and cash on China's side, there is a possibility that first capital transfer and then population transfer could make Mongolia excessively dependent on China.

The Chinese, in turn, are apprehensive about the rise of an anti-Communist, nationalist, and democratic spirit in Mongolia and its effects on Mongols of the PRC's Inner Mongolia Autonomous Republic (IMAR). They have repeatedly condemned and sometimes imprisoned so-called "separatists" in Inner Mongolia for efforts to affirm Mongol ethnicity and to promote Pan-Mongol nationalism.[36]

In short, relations between the two are likely to remain cautious and practical. Both sides try to avoid sensitive and contentious political issues. Beijing is currently dangling an economic carrot to regain influence in Mongolia. The immediate threat to Mongolia's security is thus economic rather than military in nature.

## E. MONGOLIA'S RELATIONS WITH THE UNITED STATES

Mongolia and the United States were on opposite sides during the Cold War. The US and its allies were ideological adversaries of Ulaanbaatar. Until the end of the bipolar

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[35] Denny Roy, *China's Foreign Policy* (Rowman and Littlefield Publishers Inc., 1998), 53.

[36] Morris Rossabi, "Mongolia in the 1990s: from Commissars to Capitalists?" Available [OnLine] http://www.soros.org/mongolia/rossabi.html [Feb 10, 2000]

superpower conflict, Ulaanbaatar joined the Soviets in their policies of anti-imperialism and anti-capitalism.

The warming in US-Soviet relations and the demise of the USSR allowed Mongolia to establish diplomatic ties with the US. Following the US government's extension of diplomatic recognition to Mongolia in July 1987, economic and political relations between the two countries have been on an upward swing. US Secretary of State James Baker paid the first official American visit to Mongolia in August 1990 and assured his hosts that "the United States will be your third neighbor." In 1991, President Ochirbat visited Washington, the first such visit by a Mongolian president. The US government has supported Mongolia's commitment to democracy, market-oriented economy, and integration into the broader Asia-Pacific security network. The May 1998 official visit of Secretary of State Albright to Ulaanbaatar was a reaffirmation of the US commitment to closer cooperation in various spheres with Mongolia. It highlighted the continuing US support for Mongolia's democracy.[37]

Washington granted Mongolia most-favored-nation (MFN) status in 1991 and quota-free access to the US textile market to help in reducing economic dependence on Russia and China. Investment of American firms has penetrated other sectors such as oil, heavy equipment, cashmere, and tourism. In addition, the US attitude towards Mongolia's reform and democratic process influences the level of other developed countries' participation.

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[37] "Joint Statement on US-Mongolian Relations, Ulaanbaatar, Mongolia, 2 May 1998." Available [OnLine] http://secretary.state.gov/www/statements/1998/980502.html [May 16, 2000]

Ulaanbaatar publicly appreciates the aid and development assistance provided by the US during this challenging time for Mongolia. US development aid to Mongolia totaled over $50 million between 1991-1996 and the US Agency for International Development has earmarked $6 million in aid during FY1999.[38]

In addition, both countries have continued to expand political dialogue on international and security issues. High-level political exchanges to each other's capitals have become regular. Both sides note their satisfaction with military-to-military relations. Washington continues to support specialized military training and education through the International Military Education and Training (IMET) program. Other bilateral defense cooperation includes joint training in areas such as disaster relief operation and humanitarian assistance. The US defense budget for fiscal year 2001 includes a new addition: $2 million to finance communications equipment for Mongolia's border patrol. This would represent half of the US military financing for all of Asia.[39] The willingness of the Mongolian military to participate in international peacekeeping missions rests the US military support and assistance in acquiring the necessary skills. American experts conduct seminars and briefings for the Mongol officers and sergeants.[40] However, US military has been careful that the Mongol-American defense cooperation does not

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[38] Ralph A. Cossa, "Assuring Mongolia's Independence, economic security, and Ecological Balance" in *Regional Security Issues and Mongolia* (Ulaanbaatar: Institute for Strategic Studies, No. 7), 15.

[39] "A shift in Asia, as Mongolia stirs," Mongolia, Global Intelligence Update, 19 May 2000. Available [OnLine] http://www.stratfor.com/Services/giu2000/051900.ASP

[40] "The possibility of inclusion of Mongol soldiers in peacekeeping forces," *Uduriin Toli (Daily News)*, 20 August 1999. Available [OnLine] http://www.mol.mn/udur_toli/ue4/ulstur.htm [Aug 20, 1999]

"The US assistance to Mongolian peacekeeping forces," *Zuunii Medee (Century News)*, 2 February 2001. Available [OnLine] http://www.mol.mn/zuunii_medee/zm2/main.htm [Feb 2, 2001]

develop into a type of special military-to-military relationship. This would raise suspicions among Russians and Chinese.[41]

From Mongolian side, Ulaanbaatar recognizes that expanding bilateral ties between the two countries in various spheres and US efforts to facilitate Mongolia's transition to democracy provides Mongolia with a sense of security. The General Secretary of the National Security Council of Mongolia, Ravdan Bold writes, "The US holds the key to Mongolia's re-entry into the world, not only in development but also in security terms, despite being geographically separated."[42] Mongolia is aware of its neighbors' inclination not to involve outside countries in an area of their traditional influence. Therefore, it is essential to demonstrate that this bilateral military cooperation does not portend to be an alternative to Russian-Mongolian relations, but rather as supplementary mechanism to contribute to the region's stability.[43]

In general, both the United States and Mongolia enjoy good bilateral ties with each other. Mongol-American relations have some advantages over Mongolia's relations with Russia and China. This is due to the absence of past negative legacy, conflicting national objectives, and different views on some major issues. Many in Mongolia assess the United States as a benign superpower that can protect the interests of vulnerable states from the hegemonic ambitions of regional powers. United States relations act as a counterweight to Russia and China.

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[41] Ralph A. Cossa, "Assuring Mongolia's Independence, economic security, and Ecological Balance" in *Regional Security Issues and Mongolia* (Ulaanbaatar: Institute for Strategic Studies, No. 7), 16.

[42] Ravdan Bold, "Northeast Asian security perspectives: the view from Mongolia" in Bold R., *Mongolia's Strategic View* (Ulaanbaatar: Institute for Strategic Studies, 1996), 13.

[43] Ibid., 14.

## F. MONGOLIA'S RELATIONS WITH OTHER COUNTRIES

Throughout Cold War, the Soviet-Mongolian relationship dominated all aspects of foreign affairs of Mongolia. A by-product of the relations between the two was Ulaanbaatar's diplomatic relations with the members of Warsaw Pact, North Korea, Vietnam, and later with Laos, Kampuchea, and Afghanistan. However, Mongolia also established relations with non-communist countries. For example, in 1955, India became the first non-communist country to recognize Ulaanbaatar and, in 1963 United Kingdom was the first Western nation to develop relations with Mongolia.

The Soviet retreat presented Mongolia an opportunity to look both to its east and west. Mongolia's open policy has encouraged a number of countries to expand their interest in the potentially rich resources of Mongolia.

Mongolia and Japan established diplomatic ties as early as 1972. Politics prevented this opening from developing into a full relationship. Japan is today Mongolia's most generous friend. Since 1990, it has positively responded to Mongolia's request for economic and technical assistance. The aid provided by Japan has been a tremendous relief for the Mongolia's faltering economy in its transition to a market system. The Former Japanese Prime Minister Toshiki Kaifu reciprocated the 1990 Mongolian leader's visit to Tokyo in 1991. He pledged to give US$15 million as immediate economic aid and decided to hold an international conference on aid to Mongolia, to be attended by US, Germany, the International Monetary Fund (IMF), the Asian Development Bank (ADB), the United Nations Development Program (UNDP), and the European Union (EU). Co-sponsored by Japan and the World Bank (WB), the

first Tokyo aid donors' conference in September 1991 brought the prospect of large-scale international relief for the economy of Mongolia.

Tokyo granted Mongolia the MFN status in 1990. Mongolia and Japan have signed a number of economic cooperation agreements. After Russia and China, Japan now ranks as Mongolia's third largest trading partner. Mongolia offers Japan immense natural resources such as iron ore, coal, copper, tin, silver, gold, and uranium in return for Japanese capital, technological assistance, and consumer goods.

Japan is also the largest aid donor to Mongolia, accounting for about forty per cent of its total foreign assistance. By organizing the donors' conference, it has been instrumental in focusing the developed nations' attention and assistance on Mongolia. For reasons of geography, history, and economy, Japan plays an important role in Mongolia's search for new foreign policy options to guarantee its future security, independence, and economic prosperity.[44] Mongolia works to develop the relationship with Japan into a comprehensive partnership. The "Joint Statement on Friendship and Cooperation," issued during the 1998 visit of the Mongolian president to Japan, is the reaffirmation of this commitment.

South Korea is another key Northeastern country that plays an important role in Mongolia's economic reconstruction. Since the establishment of diplomatic relations in April 1990, South Korea has developed good relations with Mongolia. South Korea has assisted in improving television broadcasting and telecommunication and in providing

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[44] Marko Milivojevic, *The Mongolian Revolution of 1990: Stability or Conflict in Inner Asia?* (Conflict Studies No. 242, London: Research Institute for the Study of Conflict and Terrorism, June 1991), 21.

private sector with managerial expertise. The bilateral ties between the two culminated in a June 1999 visit to Ulaanbaatar by Republic of Korea President Kim Dae Jung. During the visit, Mongolia endorsed President Kim's "Sunshine Policy."

In Western Europe, Germany is the cornerstone of Mongolia diplomacy. Germany, following Japan, also plays an important role in the economic development of Mongolia. Mongolia sends military officers to Germany's colleges and academies.

Mongolia's search for new allies has also led it to cultivating closer ties with countries in Southeast and Central Asia, such as India, Canada, Australia, New Zealand, Malaysia, Singapore, and the five Central Asian republics of the former Soviet Union. Concerns over nuclear weapons provide a shared interest with Central Asia. Another step toward enhanced relations center on Central Asia's joint peacekeeping battalion. The participation of Mongolian platoon in this formation in 2000 will help to lead Mongolia into NATO's Partnership for Peace program.

## G. CONCLUSION

During the Cold War Mongolia's ties with the Soviet Union and its allies dominated its international relations. It committed itself to "strengthen the unity, friendship and cooperation of the countries of the world socialist system."[45] Mongolia sided firmly with the USSR on every major foreign policy issue during this period, including Albania, Yugoslavia, and the Soviet split with China.[46] Its military build-up

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[45]Ole Bruun and Ole Odgaard, *Mongolia in Transition* (Nordic Institute of Asian Studies, 1996), 219.

[46] Tumurchuluun G., "Mongolia's Foreign Policy Revisited: Relations with Russia and the PRC into the 1990s" in *Mongolia in the Twentieth Century: Landlocked Cosmopolitan*, ed. Stephen Kotkin and Bruce A. Elleman (M.E. Sharpe, Inc. New York, 1999), 278.

through alliance with the Soviet Union and de-facto Warsaw Pact membership was the backbone of Mongolia's external security management during the Cold War.

With the end of the Soviet empire, Mongolia rid itself of its long-standing subservience to Moscow. It was able to adopt a multi-pillared foreign policy approach. The approach acknowledged the opportunities of developing meaningful relations with a great number of nations and the multiplicity of areas of cooperation where Mongolia can engage.

Russia and China are important components of Mongolia's multi-pillared foreign policy. Renouncing its excessive dependence on one of its neighbors, Mongolia signed "treaties of friendly relations and cooperation" with Russia and China. The principle underpinning bilateral relations with both of them are even-handedness and balance, good neighborliness, equal and mutually beneficial cooperation.[47] The essence of the evenhandedness and balance is to avoid the situation when one of Mongolia's neighbors becomes an enemy while the other becomes the only guarantor of its security.

The relations with the United States is a major dimension in Mongolia's foreign policy. Mongolia works to develop the relationship with Japan into a comprehensive partnership. Mongolia sees as its priority the development of relations with South Korea in Northeast Asia, India and Singapore in South Asia, Australia, New Zealand and Canada in Asia-Pacific, Germany and France in Europe, and other Central Asian countries.

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47 "Concept of National Security of Mongolia." Available [OnLine] http://www.extmin.mn/concept_of_national_security_ofm.htm [Oct 10, 2000]

In order to gain recognition and seek support of other countries, Mongolia has worked hard to integrate itself with the dynamic of Asia-Pacific region while showing it is a good citizen. Ulaanbaatar sees each country as a partner in Mongolia's economic development. It has sought "third partnerships" to escape the narrow geopolitical and geostrategic frameworks provided by its history and secure the country's future.

# IV. MONGOLIA'S OPTIONS

## A. INTRODUCTION

With disproportionately huge neighbors, Mongolia's vulnerability has been an unpleasant reality. Major changes in Russia and China have had a profound impact on the national security of Mongolia. The theme of Mongolia's political survival and vulnerability has always loomed large in Mongolia. The belief that a sovereign state must independently manage its foreign affairs fuels this anxiety.

In the past century, Mongolia employed different means to ensure its survival and offset its vulnerability. The approaches used have ranged from:

- Military build-up,
- Cold War Alliance,
- Bilateral relations,
- Participation in regional and global multilateral security, political, and economic organizations.

This chapter analyzes Mongolia's approaches to security and independence and the resulting national security concepts. From 1911 to early 1990s, Mongolia transitioned from a status of de facto independence in 1911 to de jure independence in 1946. During this time, it utilized a balance of power approach through alliance and national military build-up. Since the end of the Cold War, Mongolia has relied chiefly on diplomacy and multilateral cooperation. This study illustrates that while a realist perspective explains Mongolia's Cold-War approach to security, a neoliberal concept embraces the post-communist policies.

## B. BALANCE OF POWER APPROACH

### 1. The Past

Mongolian security thinking and behavior throughout the Cold War period were based on the realist tradition. Security through power (alliance and armament build-up) was the dominant approach. Mongolia managed its external security by maintaining and strengthening its alliance with the Soviet Union and by building up its own armed forces. Within the framework of Soviet-Mongolian defense treaties, the two sides agreed to "undertake all necessary measures with the purpose of ensuring security of the two countries, including defense."[48] The treaties paved the way for the large-scale deployment of Soviet troops in Mongolia. This transformed the Sino-Mongolian border into de-facto Sino-Soviet border.[49] Mongolia's rationale behind the alliance strategy was not a regional distribution of power but the presence of a preponderant of Chinese threat. Mongolia built up its armaments and the number of military personnel to "a level sufficient to carry out joint operations with the Soviet armed forces" to minimize the military threat from the south.[50]

This dominant security paradigm limited the scope of security to military dimension. The government downplayed to a certain degree other security issues. Economics served security and military policy. Ideology was a major tool used by the

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[48] Treaty of Friendship, Cooperation and Mutual Assistance between the USSR and MPR, January 1966, Ulaanbaatar, Mongolia.

[49] See Ravdan Bold, "Military Aspects of Mongolian Geopolitics" in Bold R., *Mongolia's Strategic View* (Ulaanbaatar: Institute for Strategic Studies, 1996).

[50] "Mongolian Defense White Paper 1997-1998" (Ulaanbaatar: Mongolia's Institute for Strategic Studies, 1998), 5.

Communist Party to exert economic pressure and provide justification to obtain security and military goals.[51] Central decision makers and the public shared a belief that a military threat from China was real and dangerous. The history and behavior of China, intensified by the huge differences in population, drove this threat perception.

The Soviet umbrella ensured Mongolia's security and survival as a nation. However, it entailed significant costs:

- Restricted Mongolia's freedom of action,
- Resulted in a significant dilution of its national sovereignty,
- Precluded ties with non-Soviet bloc countries,[52]
- Made Soviet enemies Mongolia's enemies,[53] and
- Increased the Chinese hostility.[54]

As Mongolia became heavily dependent on economic aid, the Soviets enjoyed a preponderance of influence over its partner's policy. This "entrapment" could have cost dearly for Mongolia if armed conflict between USSR and PRC had broken out and Mongolia had become a theater of hostilities. "Soviet nuclear weapons were based at a site some twenty miles from Ulaanbaatar and in the southern part of the country," Mongolia's Ambassador to the UN Enkhsaihan stated, adding that "the devices were

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[51] Robert Rupen, *How Mongolia is really ruled: a Political History of the Mongolian People's Republic, 1900-1978* (Stanford, California: Hoover Institution Press, 1979), 124.

[52] Bold R., "Northeast Asian security perspectives: the view from Mongolia" in Bold R., *Mongolia's Strategic View* (Ulaanbaatar: Institute for Strategic Studies, 1996), 8.

[53] Batbayar Baterdene, "Mongolia's experience of transition." Available [OnLine] http://www.baabar.com/books/experience.html [July 24, 2000]

[54] Marko Milivojevic, *The Mongolian Revolution of 1990: Stability or Conflict in Inner Asia?* (Conflict Studies No. 242, London: Research Institute for the Study of Conflict and Terrorism, June 1991).

trained on Beijing. China, in turn, targeted these installations with its own weapons."[55] The threat worked both ways: Mongolia might be a platform for Soviet aggression in China or for Chinese aggression aimed at USSR.[56]

The Sino-Soviet joint communiqué of May 1989 marked the end of the Soviet umbrella for Mongolia. The Soviet's abandonment of its ally "has thrown Mongolia off balance." The Soviet military and economic retreat hurt the primary security mechanism and economy of Mongolia. However, it presented an opportunity for Mongolians to conduct domestic and foreign policy independent of the Soviets.

### 2. The Present: Is This Approach Possible Today?

The past decade has witnessed major internal and external transformations taking place in Mongolia. These have profoundly affected Mongolia's traditional conception of security. Mongolia overthrew communist rule and embarked on the path toward democracy. The government introduced political pluralism and a market-based economy. These events facilitated the transformation of the ideological and institutional foundations of security. Improved Sino-Mongolian bilateral ties and the end of Cold War have created a new external security environment. The positive external changes have made it imperative for Mongolia to replace the old national security concept based on "southern threat."

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[55] Steve Goldstein, "Mongolia takes on the big five at UN," *Herald,* 31 August 2000, p9, A8.

[56] Robert Rupen, *How Mongolia is really ruled: a Political History of the Mongolian People's Republic, 1900-1978* (Stanford, California: Hoover Institution Press, 1979), 85.

Mongolia's new "National Security Concept" is comprehensive and multidimensional. It encompasses both the external and internal elements. Mongolia does not regard security primarily as a military problem. Its notion of security is broader incorporating political, economic, social, and cultural dimensions. **The "Concept" defines Mongolia's national interests as the assured existence of the Mongolian people, their culture and way of life, the independence, sovereignty, territorial integrity, inviolability of the frontier, relative economic independence, ecologically balanced development and national unity.**[57]

Aware of the political realities in Mongolia and the international community, as well as the evolution of international relations and power politics, Mongolia has defined the following as the primary areas of its concern:

- security of the existence of Mongolia;
- security of the social order and state system;
- security of citizen's rights and freedoms;
- security of information
- security of Mongolian civilization;
- security of the population and its gene pool;
- ecological security.[58]

The new security concept divides the factors affecting the national security into internal and external by their origins and into immediate, temporary, long-term, and

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[57] "Concept of National Security of Mongolia." Available [OnLine] http://www.extmin.mn/concept_of_national_security_ofm.htm [Oct 10, 2000]

[58] Ibid.

permanent by their duration. Due to the changed threat environment, Mongolia has developed new approaches for its national security. They combine "social, political, organizational, economic, diplomatic, military, intelligence, and legal means, unilaterally or through the development of international cooperation."[59]

This non-alignment policy replaces the former realist alliance approach. Factors such as history, the experience of alliance with the former Soviet Union, and geopolitical isolation influence Mongolia to pursue such a policy. The "Concept" states that, in peacetime, Ulaanbaatar "neither will join any military-political alliance nor will allow foreign troops stationed within its territory unless an appropriate law is adopted."[60] However, both the "Concept" and the constitution do not deny the possibility of an alliance approach. Mongolia's threat perception conditions the external security management. If Mongolia perceives the external environment as hostile, or threat to national interests as imminent, it will seek external sources of military assistance.

Mongolia's non-alignment concept also includes a policy of "non-involvement and neutrality in the disputes between its two neighbors."[61] The past century has witnessed the exacerbation and normalization of Sino-Russian relations on four occasions. Therefore, there is no guarantee that these big states will not be in confrontation with each other again.[62] These historical facts and the experience of

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[59] Ibid.

[60] Ibid., or "Concept of Mongolia's Foreign Policy." Available [OnLine] http://www.extmin.mn/concept_of_foreign_policy.htm [Dec 23, 2000]

[61] Ibid.

[62] Ravdan Bold, *The Security of Small State: Option for Mongolia,* No. 9 (Ulaanbaatar: Institute for Strategic Studies, 2000), 17.

entanglement in the two's disputes account for the predominance of such a policy. It is important to note that this neutral posture applies only to disputes between Russia and China. However, if such disputes affect the country's national interests, this policy is void.

It is obvious that the national security of a country with a small population, vast territory, and poor economy cannot solely depend on its military power. To offset its vulnerability through peacetime alliance is neither possible nor viable. Any alliance with a third power (if it were available) would adversely affect Mongolia's security. It will unduly alarm Russia and China, engender suspicion, and "hypothetically jeopardize" their interests.[63] The 1993 Russian-Mongol and the 1994 Sino-Mongol treaties clearly express the Russian and Chinese desire to prevent another "USSR" from using Mongolia as the Soviet Union did during the Cold War.

Since early 1990s, Mongolia has downsized its military personnel by several thousands and has aimed to maintain "compact, capable and professionally-oriented armed forces."[64] Why must Mongolia have armed forces? The first civilian defense minister explained, "Neither of our neighbors intends to attack Mongolia, but neither do we neglect that some incidents might develop which threaten Mongolian security."[65] However, the absence of any visible external threat and elevation of economic development to central importance underlie the low priority accorded to the military

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[63] Ravdan Bold, "Northeast Asian security perspectives: the view from Mongolia" in Bold R., *Mongolia's Strategic View* (Ulaanbaatar: Institute for Strategic Studies, 1996), 13.

[64] "The Basic Issues of Defense Policy of Mongolia." Available [OnLine] http://www.pmis.gov.mn/mdef/english/dsystem.htm [Jan 15, 2001]

[65] Karnio R., "The Jane's Interview", *Jane's Defense Weekly*, vol. 28, No. 14, p. 64, 8 October 1997.

aspect of national security. The military's missions emphasize peacetime roles such as border patrol, disaster relief, humanitarian assistance, and preparation for peacekeeping commitments. The Ministry of Defense aims to boost professionalism while reducing costs and threats.

The Mongolian government has signed formal agreements on military-to-military cooperation with the United States and other countries. Realism cannot adequately account for these agreements. Strengthening its relations with them, however, is essential to giving Mongolia a greater sense of security and confidence in its political and economic reform.[66] Another means for achieving good relations with the US and other developed countries are Mongolia's democratization. That Mongolia is more or less a fully democratic country has significantly increased sympathy in Asian and Western democracies.

Today this context determines whether Mongolia should deploy realist or neoliberalist prescriptions in its external security management. Diplomacy and comprehensive regional cooperation top the list of approaches to security. The alliance approach is not possible and viable at peacetime, given the unique circumstances of Mongolia.

## C. MULTILATERAL APPROACH

Mongolia considers its security and future development within the framework of the Asia-Pacific region, notably Northeast Asia. Mongolia deems its membership in

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66 Ravdan Bold, "Northeast Asian security perspectives: the view from Mongolia" in Bold R., *Mongolia's Strategic View* (Ulaanbaatar: Institute for Strategic Studies, 1996), 14.

multilateral security and political organizations and integration with global and regional economies as a key international security strategy.

### 1. Asia-Pacific Multilateral Arrangements: Overview

For a variety of historical, cultural, geographic, and developmental reasons, the Asia-Pacific has been a latecomer to multilateral security. With the exception of the Southeast Asian Treaty Organization (SEATO) and the Australia-New Zealand-United States (ANZUS) treaty of 1951, multilateral security arrangements were rarities in the Asia-Pacific during the Cold War. The Cold War environment was antithetical to multilateralism. Instead, bilateralism prevailed in the form of alliances radiating from Washington and Moscow. The Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN), formed in 1967, was the remarkable exception to this rule. However, ASEAN's purpose was not as a security institution. Rather, the member-states directed their efforts toward building trust and confidence, developing principles and norms to govern their interaction, preventing disputes, and bolstering the collective and diplomatic weight of the members.[67]

Owing to the end of the Cold War and to dynamic economic developments, the regional security structure has been undergoing a profound transformation. Economic factors, particularly the high rate of economic growth and high degree of economic interdependence, are changing both the structure of security relations and the systemic tendencies toward conflict and peace.[68]

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[67] Muthiah Alagappa, "Asian Security Practice" (California: Stanford University Press, 1998), 635.

[68] Ball D., "Multilateral Security Cooperation in the Asia-Pacific Region: Challenges in the Post-Cold War Era" in *Security Environment in the Asia-Pacific Region,* ed. Hung-mao Tien and Tun-jen Cheng (Armonk, New York, London, England: M.E. Sharpe Inc., 2000).

As result, although the region is enjoying a period of relative peace and tranquility, the security situation in Asia Pacific is still volatile and complex. High capability, abiding animus, proximity of the four major powers to the strategic field of play, and the absence of any multilateral security regime characterizes the regional security picture.[69] A number of factors cause anxieties among these nations. Some argue that the following strategic developments represent primary areas of concern:

- uncertainty about China's strategic intentions;
- uncertainty about the US military presence in the region;
- uncertainty surrounding Japan's future identity;
- unpredictability regarding the North Korean policy toward South Korea.[70]

The above uncertainties, combined with the extraordinary economic growth, have induced certain states to increase resource allocation for their defense programs. Such moves, in turn, raise the prospect of a regional arms race.[71] Persistence of the past problems (territorial disputes, divided nations, and nuclear proliferation) and emergence of new threats (economic and ecological concerns) add apprehension.[72]

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[69] Samuel S. Kim, "East Asia and Globalization: Challenges and Responses" *in East Asia and Globalization*, ed. Samuel S. Kim (Rowman and Littlefield Publishers Inc., 2000), 13.

[70] See Muthiah Alagappa, "Asian Security Practice" (California: Stanford University Press 1998); Oh Kwan-chi, "The Anatomy of Anxiety in the Emerging East Asia Security Order"; Robert A. Manning, "Building Community or Building Conflict? A Typology of Asia Pacific Security Challenges" in *Asia Pacific Confidence and Security Building Measures* ed., Ralph A. Cossa (Washington D.C.: The Center for Strategic and International Studies, 1995).

[71] Ball D., "Multilateral Security Cooperation in the Asia-Pacific Region: Challenges in the Post-Cold War Era" in *Security Environment in the Asia-Pacific Region,* ed. Hung-mao Tien and Tun-jen Cheng (Armonk, New York, London, England: M.E. Sharpe, Inc., 2000).

[72] Peter Van Ness, "Globalization and Security in East Asia" in *East Asia and Globalization*, ed. Samuel S. Kim, (Rowman and Littlefield Publishers Inc., 2000), 265-266.

The security strategies of the Asian countries are becoming broader and more complex. Strategies of self-help are still important. However, the norm of cooperative security is gaining ground. The awareness that multilateral measures can reduce the level of uncertainty and anxiety is also growing.[73] Several factors have fueled Asian interest in broad-based multilateral security arrangements:[74]

- general apprehension about regional uncertainty and unpredictability;
- the non-availability or distrust of bilateral alliance arrangements;
- the weaknesses of national military capabilities;
- ongoing power transition.

The region is undergoing a "gradual erosion of realist thinking and new emphasis on cooperative security strategies."[75] Asia has not duplicated the European integration in multilateral security structures. However, a clear signal of the growing broader regional commitment to multilateralism in the Asia-Pacific region is the development of the Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC), the ASEAN Regional Forum (ARF), and the Council for Security Cooperation in the Asia Pacific (CSCAP).

### 2. Multilateral Options for Mongolia

ARF is so far the only Asia-Pacific region-wide vehicle for exchanges on security issues at the governmental level. Founded in 1994, it brings together foreign ministers

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[73] Ralph A. Cossa, *Asia Pacific Confidence and Security Building Measures* (Washington D. C.: The Center for Strategic and International Studies, 1995), 6; Muthiah Alagappa, *Asian Security Practice* (California: Stanford University Press, 1998), 638.

[74] Muthiah Alagappa, *Asian Security Practice* (California: Stanford University Press, 1998), 633-635.

[75] Peter Van Ness, "Globalization and Security in East Asia" in *East Asia and Globalization*, ed. Samuel S. Kim, (Rowman and Littlefield Publishers Inc., 2000), 267.

from twenty two countries. ARF has made steady progress and contributions to promote confidence-building, preventive diplomacy, and conflict resolutions. It has initiated many proposals, such as an Asian arms registry, military transparency, and other confidence and security-building measures. However, some analysts consider ARF inadequate or "just a talking shop." Part of the problem is that the institutional culture of the ARF is antithetical to dramatic action. The ARF functions on the basis of consensus decision-making and non-intervention in the affairs of member states. It does not have a system of a projected regional community, a collective security umbrella, or a concert of powers.[76] Ralph Cossa, the Executive Director of Pacific Forum CSIS, comments that the ARF needs to evolve beyond its useful but limited "talk shop" format not only to address the region's more sensitive security issues but also to develop joint procedures for dealing with them.[77] Nonetheless, ARF's "talking shop" has laid the foundation of a change in security behavior among the ARF member-states.

Australia inaugurated the concept of the APEC forum in 1989. APEC is not intended to become a multilateral security body. Its mandate is trade facilitation and liberalization. However, with accelerating pace of economic interdependence, it is

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[76] Boutilier A. J., "Reflections on Multilateral Security in the Asia-Pacific Region in the 21st Century," paper presented at the 3rd Meeting of Heads of Defense Colleges and Institutions, Ulaanbaatar, Mongolia, 21-25 September 1999; Muthiah Alagappa, *Asian Security Practice* (California: Stanford University Press, 1998), 637.

[77] Ralph A. Cossa, "Bush's Emerging Asia Policy: What's Still Missing." Available [OnLine] http://www.csis.org/pacfor/pac0106.html

increasingly difficult to disaggregate regional security concerns from trade and economic issues. Its annual meeting can also have profound political and security consequences.[78]

CSCAP, established in 1993, provides a structured process for regional confidence building and security cooperation among countries and territories in the Asia-Pacific region. It also focuses its efforts on providing direct support to the ARF. Several CSCAP issue-oriented working groups are focusing on specific topics outlined in various ARF communiqués. These include international working groups on confidence and security building measures (CSBM), comprehensive and cooperative security, transnational crime, and maritime security cooperation, along with a North Pacific Working Group (NPWG) focused on the establishment of frameworks for Northeast Asia security cooperation.[79] This non-governmental body is ideally suited for tapping the region's intellectual resources. It entails a wide array of players - academicians, security specialists, and former and current foreign ministry and defense officials.

### 3. Mongolia's International and Regional Cooperation

Mongolia regards multilateralism is a one of the key components of the national security strategy. Several considerations command Mongolia's policy makers to pay more attention to multilateral security arrangements:

- Such arrangements are considerably broader in terms of its substance, weight, and influence, as opposed to a bilateral alliance arrangement, where a greater state often subordinates a smaller nation's interests to its own.

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[78] Ralph A. Cossa, *Asia Pacific Confidence and Security Building Measures* (Washington D.C.: The Center for Strategic and International Studies, 1995), 7.

[79] Ralph A. Cossa, "Assuring Mongolia's Independence, Economic Security, and Ecological Balance" in *Regional Security Issues and Mongolia* (Ulaanbaatar: Institute for Strategic Studies, No. 7), 18.

- Such arrangements can have constraining effect on or institutionally "tame" a possible hegemon. Through joint efforts, states can change and influence its ambitious policy.
- They prevent a strong power from exploiting its superiority over weaker states. It does not allow a military power to impose its own ideas and interests.
- For small nations, they open equal channels of dialogue with bigger powers. Small nations have an opportunity to advance their own ideas and initiatives irrespective of balance of forces. They have a possibility to equally participate and influence some developments rather than taking a passive stance. Both big powers and small countries enjoy equal rights in adopting decisions.
- They can present a possibility for small countries to raise their recognition and support and uplift their status and prestige through their contributions to enhance security, peace, and stability.
- They may complement or supplant self-help approaches (military capability) and facilitate the diversion of resources to domestic concerns.
- They can help to minimize historical animosity and mistrust among nations, thereby reducing anxiety and uncertainty.
- They may help isolated states to branch out from confined geopolitical positions.

Overall, Mongolia's leaders see numerous benefits in full membership in multilateral security organizations. Multilateral political and security relations help not only to enhance the country's independence but also to consolidate its democracy.

Mongolia attaches particular importance to the ARF. The July 1998 acceptance of Mongolia as a member of the ARF marked a major step in Ulaanbaatar's emergence from

over seventy years' domination by the Soviet Union. Mongolia is also a full member of the CSCAP. Mongolia takes an active part in the meetings and sessions of these organizations. Ulaanbaatar has hosted several meetings and conferences at governmental and non-governmental level.

Mongolia joined the World Trade Organization (WTO) in 1996, becoming the first former communist country to negotiate entry into the organization since 1989. It also cooperates closely with the World Bank, Asian Development Bank, and International Monetary Fund.

Mongolia has also enrolled in a number of multilateral economic arrangements and schemes, such as the Tumen River Area Development Programme (TRADP) and the Agricultural Cooperation and Support (ACS). Joining together with South Korea, China, and Russia, Ulaanbaatar has discussed forming a regional investment corporation to fund large infrastructure projects in Northeast Asia.

Mongolia is pursuing further integration by trying to join APEC. Mongolian leaders have expressed a desire to develop and become a part of an ARF-type organization in Northeast Asia. It increasingly recognizes the value of international cooperation to its security, economic survival, and status.

## D. CONCLUSION

History, geopolitics, type of state, and level of economic, military, and social development have had a crucial bearing on Mongolia's security thinking and behavior. To ensure its security, Mongolia has used a variety of approaches, such as national defense build-up, alliance, strengthening bilateral relationships, diplomacy, and multilateral international and regional cooperation.

Realist perspective explains Mongolia's Cold War security thinking and behavior. During this time, the relationship of Ulaanbaatar with Beijing focused on China's security threat to Mongolia. The history and behavior of China shaped Mongolia's perception of the threat. The principal approaches to security were an alliance with the Soviet Union and a national military build-up. The USSR guaranteed the national security of Mongolia within the framework of Soviet-Mongolian mutual defense treaties. Concurrently, the government of Mongolia extensively built up the national military capability to complement this Soviet strategy. Ulaanbaatar regarded military security as more fundamental than any other type. Concern with internal security was weaker than with external security.

Mongolia's approach through alliance with a strong power fostered a sense of security. However, it entailed negative consequences. Because of the military and economical dependence of Mongolia, the alliance developed into "patron-client relationship." The Soviet Union enjoyed a preponderance of influence over Mongolia's policy.

Since the normalization of Sino-Soviet relations, the fall of the Soviet Union, and the end of the Cold War, Mongolia has undergone radical internal and external transformations. The new 1992 constitution threw out the last vestiges of communism. Mongolia declared itself as a democratic state. Externally, the normalization of Sino-Mongolian relations and Chinese new international position created a wholly new security environment. Today, Mongolia does not face any visible external threat. It does not have any serious dispute with its neighbors. The environment surrounding Mongolia is benign.

The new internal and systemic environment has deeply affected Ulaanbaatar's conception of security, resulting in new concept and security approaches. The new "Concept of National Security" of Mongolia is comprehensive and multidimensional. Political, economic, social, cultural, and environmental security figures into the national security agenda in addition to military factors.

The government accords top priority to economic development. Understanding the interdependence between political, security, and economic issues has emerged. The general attitude in Mongolia is that a sound economic policy and general development are the only ways to further its national security. The primacy of economics and absence of a clear external threat warrant low priority to the military. Therefore, Mongolia maintains relatively small armed forces, stressing efficiency, mobility, and professionalism.

Mongolia counts primarily on diplomacy and global and regional multilateral cooperation. Mongolia's primary goal is to retain friendly and balanced relations with Russia and China. Mongolia pursues a policy of non-alignment. Non-involvement and neutrality towards its neighbors figure into the security concept of Mongolia. Historical experience and geopolitical isolation persuade Mongolia to adopt this stance. It pursues such a policy as long as no overwhelming threat to its vital national interests emerges.

A number of factors influence Mongolia's decision makers to rely on multilateralism. Through multilateral security mechanisms, Mongolia hopes to reduce historical animosities and mistrust among nations, restrain hegemonic ambitions of powerful countries, present equal rights to smaller nations, enhance international position and increase recognition of smaller nations, and ensure stable and peaceful environment.

To take advantage of these benefits Mongolia has become a member of numerous multilateral organizations. International financial structures also play an important role for Mongolia to attain its objectives. Ulaanbaatar is pursuing further integration with international and regional community. Mongolian leaders have a desire to develop and become a part of an ARF-type organization in Northeast Asia. Broadly speaking, old traditional realist approaches have given way to a new neoliberalist line.

# V. SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION

Geopolitical heritage has made political survival and existence of Mongols as a nation always prominent in Mongolia. Mongols who once ruled an empire encompassing both Russia and China centuries ago became a pawn in Asia's great game since the 17th century. Division of the Mongol nation, rule by Manchus, and Soviet domination thereafter have implanted in Mongols a sense of vulnerability and insecurity. The belief that a sovereign state must pursue self-determination enhances this unease.

How to attain the costly objectives of national security has been the enduring problem for Mongolia. Since achieving international recognition as an independent state, Mongolia has deployed different approaches to its security and independence.

A realist approach dominated Mongolia's external security for the seven decades before the demise of the Cold War. An alliance and national military build-up were the prevalent approaches to security. Maintaining and strengthening the alliance with the Soviet Union was crucial for Mongolia. This was imperative in light of Mongolia's historical relationship with China. Mongolia's realist behavior derived from its vulnerabilities:

- Weak external defense,
- Small and sparsely settled population,
- Underdeveloped economy, and
- Geographical isolation.

Realistic alternatives to the Soviet Union were non-existent. Military-strategic interests formed the foundation of the Soviet's policy toward Mongolia. Communist economic and organizational structures were adapted to Mongol politics and society. Given the Soviets'

disproportionate military and economic advantage, the ties between the two grew into a "patron-client relationship."

Soviet-Mongolian mutual defense treaties solidified their relationship. The treaties justified the stationing of the Soviet troops on Mongolia's territory. Supporting the Soviet strategy, Mongolia built up its armament and the numbers of military personnel. Economics served military-strategic policy and ideology justified the goals that defined much of what happened in Mongolia. The fundamental preoccupation of Mongolia's government was military security. Ulaanbaatar's perception of a "southern threat" stemmed from the memories of rule by Manchu Qing dynasty, the ill treatment and assimilation of Mongols in Inner Mongolia, and irredentist claims by Chinese leaders.

The major benefit gained by Mongolians from the alliance was survival as a nation-state. However, it incurred significant costs. Moscow restricted Ulaanbaatar's freedom of action, precluded ties with non-Soviet bloc countries, and alienated Soviet enemies. Moreover, to the degree that the Soviet Union enhanced Mongolia's security, they threatened the security of China.

The Sino-Soviet rapprochement, the demise of the Soviet Union, and the end of the Cold War brought a new era to Mongolia. Dismantling the old political, economic, and social structures, Mongolia committed itself to democracy, market economy, and transparency. Systemic international changes, the end of the Soviet umbrella, democratic and economic reforms, and removal of Marxist-Leninist ideology from foreign and domestic policies led Mongolia to reevaluate its security policy and relations with both neighbors.

The new "Security Concept of Mongolia" reflects a profound shift from that of the communist period. The scope of security now includes political, economic, social, cultural, and ecological aspects. The concept designed new approaches to securing its redefined objectives.

The realist approach through an alliance has become non-viable for Mongolia. Three considerations influence this:

- Previous alliance experience and its consequences;
- Russian and Chinese opposition to a third power exerting a strong influence on their borders; and
- Great Powers unwillingness to sacrifice their relations with China and Russia.

Mongolia now maintains a small military, stressing mobility, effectiveness, and professionalism. However, the need for economic development and the lack of a clear external threat constrain the possibility of a realist approach.

Today, Mongolia seeks its security through political and diplomatic means such as unilateral efforts, splicing together bilateral frameworks, and multilateral regional and international cooperation. An example of unilateral measures is Mongolia's declaration of itself as a single nuclear-free state. This was important considering the two decades of nuclear threat that hung over Mongolia. This policy aimed not only to ensure the security, but also to contribute to strengthening the regional and global non-proliferation regime.

Mongolia's security is one way or another connected with its two neighbors and their mutual relations. Therefore, Mongolia's relations with Russia and China constitute the cornerstone of its security policy. They receive top priority in Ulaanbaatar's foreign policy. Mongolia has signed bilateral treaties of friendly relations and cooperation with

both neighbors. Mindful of the consequences of pursuing unilateralism towards the Soviet Union in the past, Mongolia adopts a non-aligned and neutral posture concerning disputes between Russia and China. It adheres to the principle of a balanced relationship between its neighbors.

The post-Cold War world order has presented an opportunity for Mongolia to break its political isolation. The impact of the Sino-Soviet relations on Mongolia's fate has diminished. Diversifying its relations, Mongolia has found "third partners." This was the lacking ingredient under communism. This ingredient is the sum of nations, including countries such as the United States, Japan, Germany, and South Korea, whose interests in Mongolia have considerably grown. Close cooperation with these "third partners" is an important factor for Mongolia in counterbalancing the influence of its neighbors and carrying out its political and economic reforms. Mongolia's support from the international community provides a sense of security in relation to its neighbors. Russia's and China's dependence on foreign technology, investment, and assistance ensure the linkage of their regional policies to the opinions of these developed nations.

Multilateralism is Mongolia's key international strategy to guarantee the national security and economic survival. Multilateral organizations serve significant security functions for Mongolia. Active participation in the work of the United Nations and its various components remains one of Mongolia's most important objectives. Mongolia is deeply interested in benefiting from the United Nations' increasing efforts to guarantee the independence and integrity of nations, especially smaller ones, in times of crisis. It is of great value to Mongolia to share the knowledge and experience accumulated by United Nations' institutions in diverse fields of developmental activity.

Mongolia sees its membership in the ASEAN Regional Forum as a major step toward enhancement of its security. It also plays an active role in nongovernmental bodies, such Council for Security Cooperation in the Asia Pacific and Northeast Asian Security Dialogue. Next, Mongolia looks toward membership in APEC. Mongolia has been an enthusiastic supporter of establishing an official Northeast Asian security mechanism, both through Track I and Track II channels. However, given the diversity of security interests, threat perception, history, culture, and geography, an ARF-type security structure in Northeast Asia remains unfulfilled. However, any security mechanism in Northeast Asia would require the involvement of the United States, Russia, China, and Japan. Their participation in multilateral dialogues is essential to facilitate their positive interaction with the region's neighbors and to assuage their concerns. Mongolia hopes that all the operational multilateral frameworks can institutionalize cooperation and cordial relations among nations, prescribe norms and principles of behavior, proscribe unacceptable security practices, constrain hegemonic ambitions, and alter state behavior.

It is uncertain for Mongolia and others how long the current stability and cooperation in Sino-Russian relations will last. History has seen alternate periods of cooperation and rivalry between Russia and China. It is fortunate for Mongolia today that its powerful neighbors are preoccupied with their own internal concerns. Mongolia should continue to use this opportunity to integrate itself further into the international environment, strengthen its external links, participate in multilateral structures, and develop itself as a crossroad of different civilizations and economies. It is a unique chance that Mongolia cannot afford to miss. With a coherent national strategy, active

diplomacy, accurate threat assessments, and innovative thinking, Mongolia will come out of the shadow of its neighbors and ensure its independence and role as a player in the international community.

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